



**Subject: English**

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**Topic – L7 : A VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE**

**Pre Activity :** Describe one of the well-known tourist destinations in your city.

**Working with Text**

**Answer the following questions:**

**1. (i) Did the prospect of meeting Stephen Hawking make the writer nervous? If so, why?**

Ans: The prospect of meeting Stephen Hawking made the writer nervous because Stephen Hawking is a brilliant scientist. He is quadriplegic. He is the writer of the book “A Brief History of Time” which is one of the biggest best-sellers ever. He became the descendant of Isaac Newton at the University of Cambridge. Meeting such a great scientist made the writer nervous.

**(ii) Did he at the same time feel very excited? If so, why?**

Ans: Yes, the writer felt excited as well. He was excited to meet this brilliant disabled scientist who was considered as a descendant of Sir Isaac Newton. He had achieved many milestones in his life. The writer was made aware of many possibilities present before him and he felt stronger because of the meeting. This meeting helped him discover his potential, which he thought he never could.

**2. Guess the first question put before the scientist by the writer.**

Ans: The writer’s first question to Hawking might have been about his disability, how he had accepted it and how he had been so brave to reach where he was.

**3. Stephen Hawking said, “I’ve had no choice.” Does the writer think there was a choice? What was it?**

Ans: The writer thought that Hawking had a choice. He could have been depressed about his situation and be sad about his disability. However, he chose to accept the reality of his disintegrating body and lived his life creatively.

**4. “I could feel his anguish.” What could be the anguish?**

Ans: Hawking’s mind was full of many great ideas that he wanted to speak out loud. However, he was not able to speak. His sentences came out of voice synthesizer that could not convey any emotions or sentiments. The writer felt that Hawking was anguished by the fact that he could not express everything that he thought because of his disability. It was really sad that he had to use a computer to speak for himself.

**5. What endeared the scientist to the writer so that he said he was looking at one of the most beautiful men in the world?**

Ans: When the writer asks Stephen Hawking if he was disturbed by someone like him, Hawking replied to him very honestly and told him that he was disturbed by the writer. Then, he gave a one-way smile and this

is what endeared the writer. The writer felt at that moment that Stephen Hawking was one of the most beautiful men in the world. The writer was himself disabled and felt that it is the soul that matters in a person and not the body. The body is just an accessory.

**6. Give the description of ‘the beautiful’ man. Which is the most beautiful sentence in the description?**

Ans: The most beautiful sentence which describes Hawking’s inner glow and makes his disability look irrelevant is: “Before you, like a lantern whose walls are worn so thin you glimpse only the light inside, is the incandescence of a man”.

**7. (i) If ‘the lanterns’ is the man, what would its ‘walls’ be?**

Ans: The ‘walls’ would be the human body.

**(ii) What is housed within the thin walls?**

Ans: Light is housed within the thin walls.

**(iii) What general conclusion does the writer draw from this comparison?**

Ans: The writer realized that the soul of a man is what matters the most. The body is just an accessory.

**8. What is the scientist’s message for the disabled?**

Ans: Stephen Hawking gave a message to the disabled that they should concentrate on things which they are good at. They should be grateful to God and make the best use of their abilities. They should not set impossible goals for themselves.

**9. Why does the writer refer to the guitar incident? Which idea does it support?**

Ans: Stephen Hawking believed that the disabled should concentrate on things they are good at and that events like the disabled Olympics are a waste of time. The writer agreed with him because he himself tried to play Spanish Guitar for years and failed as it was larger than himself. The writer recalled being very happy when finally one night he unstrung it.

**10. The writer expressed his great gratitude to Stephen Hawking. What is gratitude for?**

Ans: The writer felt inspired by Stephen Hawking and expressed his gratitude towards him. He thought that Hawking was a very brave person and he himself could have been as brave as Hawking, he would have achieved so much. He felt stronger after meeting Hawking and it made him realize that even he could do great things in life.

**Post Activity :** Write a short note on the main concept of the book “ A Brief History of Time”, written by Stephen Hawking.